

## PUBLIC VALUE PARTNERSHIPS

# “The Three Rs” at work in Montana



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Public Value Partnership grants between Montana nonprofit arts organizations and the Montana Arts Council champion the fact that the arts are of benefit to all the citizens of Montana and are worthy of state and federal investment.

Public Value Partnerships utilize three tools we call “The Three Rs” to expand the public value of the work being done by Montana’s nonprofit arts organizations:

- Building relationships;
- Creating greater relevance and meaning; and
- Establishing return on investment.

MAC believes that using “The Three Rs” strengthens participation, understanding and support from audiences, donors and funders. We’d like to share some of the best examples of these stories with you from 2011:



Young art-makers at the Livingston Center for Art and Culture.

### Building Relationships

**Livingston Center for Art and Culture:** The Livingston Center for Art and Culture launched its inaugural “Poetry in the Windows” during April of 2011. We gathered poems from local writers and placed them in the windows of approximately 40 participating downtown businesses. Visitors used our map to take “Poetry Strolls” around downtown Livingston, enjoying the poems and perhaps visiting the shops as well.

We found that this event was enjoyable for all involved, allowing poets to share their work, promoting appreciation for poetry and community awareness of our local poets, and supporting downtown businesses. We also hosted a high school poetry reading in our gallery in conjunction with “Poetry in the Windows.”

### Creating Relevance

**Montana Ballet Company, Bozeman:** Comprehensive engagement is integral to MBC’s ethic. It involves reaching beyond our



Montana Ballet Company dancer warms up for a children’s performance.

initiated “Nutcracker” audiences to invite a broader section of our community to attend our performances.

MBC has historically supported a Children’s Matinee, which offers “Nutcracker” tickets free to children and for \$10 to adults. Providing complimentary and reduced price tickets greatly aids our ability to share the art form of dance with individuals and families who might not otherwise have access to live fine arts performances. Over 1,000 individuals and families watched our 2010 “Nutcracker” performance through our Children’s Matinee program.

MBC collaborates with the corporate and local business community to provide complimentary tickets to individuals and families served by local social service nonprofits, including Big Brothers Big Sisters, the Gallatin Valley Food Bank, Family Promise, Haven, the Help Center, and others. By enabling underserved populations to attend MBC performances, businesses invest in the wellbeing of the community to which we all belong. In 2011, the Share the Dance program brought over 250 people to “Nutcracker” and Spring Gala performances.

The Children’s Matinee program was connected to educational outreach in 2012. MBC dancers and guest artists visited local, under-served schools in advance of performances, and led students through an interactive movement workshop. A pilot program for the 2012 “Nutcracker” allowed students who attended an in-school workshop to receive free or greatly discounted performance tickets for themselves and parents/guardians.

In addition to these programs, our Montana Ballet Academy has fostered strong connections between MBC and our participants and constituents. Opened in the fall of 2010, the academy’s enrollment grew 40 percent during

its first year of operation, and a continued increase in enrollment is projected for the current school year.

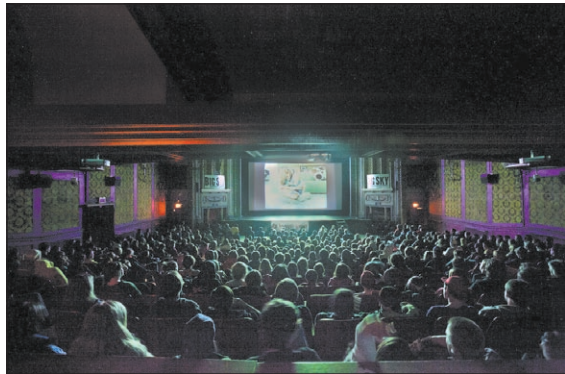
The academy offers professional ballet training from primary (age 3) through pre-professional levels. The high-quality training provided at the MBC Academy allows us to serve as a leading organization in the development of highly skilled dancers throughout the region. MBC grows in relevance by producing high-quality dancers. Local supporters can come to our studios to observe classes, meet our artistic directors, staff, and dancers.

### Return on Investment

**Big Sky Film Institute, Missoula:** The 2011 Big Sky Documentary Film Festival (BSDFF) brought large crowds of consumers into downtown Missoula during an otherwise stagnant economic time (mid-February). Additionally the festival trains its staff in valuable skills including projection and retail.

The Big Sky Youth Project brought valuable one-on-one mentoring opportunities for area high school students, and the Big Sky Film Series brought audiences together during the monthly downtown Art Walk, to appreciate and discuss the art of non-fiction film. The return on investment is further expressed in the following example:

Mackenzie Enich first came to our attention in 2009 when she signed up for our Youth Mentoring program. Mackenzie successfully



Audience takes in a film at the Wilma Theatre during the Big Sky Documentary Film Festival.

completed a film that screened at the 2010 BSDFF. She signed up again the following year and completed a second film that screened at the festival.

Now McKenzie an undergraduate at The University of Montana, and will be helping to lead the Youth Mentoring project with us this year. She is a great example of the power and influence of cinema and our program’s ability to return the investment we receive from the state.

## Chouteau County Performing Arts celebrates 20th Anniversary

By Connie Jenkins, President  
Chouteau County Performing Arts, Fort Benton

It’s been an amazing first 20 years, and I’ve been blessed to have seen it from the beginning. Chouteau County Performing Arts got started in 1992, after Carolyn Janssen Colman read in the *River Press* about a Montana Performing Arts Consortium (MPAC) meeting taking place in Choteau. Tracy Ross and I were newly involved with Fort Benton’s Summer Celebration at the time, and Carolyn suggested we attend the MPAC to scout for possible talent to invite to that event.

We were blown away by the great artists and contacts we met there, so with the backing of our local Community Improvement Association (CIA) we initiated a new group – Chouteau County Performing Arts (CCPA) – with the exciting mission to “educate and entertain” area music lovers, students and literally anyone else who might enjoy all the forms of performing and visual arts in our rural area.

The first board members consisted of Linda Hicks, Arlynn Fishbaugh, Ann Pasha, Donna Wigger, Scott McKenzie, Tracy and me. Arlynn (Arni) had just returned from New York where her involvement with the Metropolitan Opera brought to us great experience – and humor – that helped us tremendously in getting the CCPA started. She has since gone on to head the Montana Arts Council, which is a great supporter of CCPA efforts.

Linda was the long-time secretary for our group until her untimely death several years ago, and we dedicated our 2008-2009 season to her.

Many other board members have come and gone over the past 20 years. In the best Chouteau County tradition, these are all volunteers who served selflessly and diligently to bring the very best of the performing arts to our friends, neighbors and children. Their countless hours of “free labor,” as well as the strong support of the CIA, the Fort Benton Schools and River and Plains Society for the performance spaces, and the surrounding communities as a whole, underpin our first 20 years of success.

During the 1992-’93 season, we offered four performances. This year, CCPA sponsors eight great concerts, with everything from regional talent to internationally acclaimed artists. Through the years, we’ve been able to expand our offerings because of the great backing by Montana’s Cultural Trust and Montana Arts Council, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Western Arts Federation and particularly MPAC, which promotes tours of performing artists through our region in a professional and cost-effective manner.

Area backers, such as the Lippard Clawiter and Tordik Foundations, along with many businesses, organizations and individual donors, generously gave us the means to both survive and grow over the past two decades.

But ultimately, it is our patrons and CCPA members who ensure our success. There’s a sign on the side of the old Fort Benton School that reads “Industry Is Useless without Culture,” and it is due to our community’s interest and appreciation of the arts (now well over 100 CCPA performances) that we continue into this 20th performance season – and the next decade.

### Guidebook helps nonprofits improve fundraising

GuideStar, the leading source of non-profit information, and Hope Consulting, a strategy consulting firm, recently released a new guidebook, *More Money for More Good*, dedicated to helping nonprofits improve fundraising, increase effectiveness, and better engage with current and potential donors and funders.

Based on research of over 6,500 donors and foundation grantmakers, *More Money for More Good* gives nonprofits three steps to provide donors clearer, crisper information in terms of impact and performance, in the methods and on the channels that donors prefer.

The guide provides actionable tips that can help nonprofits develop and sustain meaningful relationships with their donors, such as:

- How to identify and prioritize target audiences among six donors types;
- How to appeal to the target audiences’ core values;
- What tools can help nonprofits communicate their story and impact in a simple fashion.

*More Money for More Good* is free and available online. To download the guidebook or request a hard copy, visit [www.guidestar.org/moneyforgood](http://www.guidestar.org/moneyforgood).